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www.msosocialsciences.com**Organizational Commitment Among Public Employees: A Case Study in A Public University****Mohamed Fajil Abdul Batau¹, Ahmad Shah Pakeer Mohamed¹**¹Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Study, Universiti Teknologi Mara,
Kampus Seremban Tiga, Negeri SembilanCorrespondence: Mohamed Fajil Abdul Batau (fajil_batau@ns.uitm.edu.my)**Abstract**

This study examines the factors that influence organizational commitment among public employees in residential colleges in the University of Malaya. A total of 100 employees representing 12 colleges responded to the questionnaires that were designed to measure their motivation and level of commitment. The data obtained were analyzed using correlation, analysis of variance and regression analysis were used in order to achieve the objectives of the study. The findings of this study indicated that there are significant and positive relationships between all factors (employment compensation, training and development, career development and management support) with organization commitment. Furthermore, the findings also showed a directional relationship between independent and dependent variables by which the public employees at the colleges have positive commitment to the organization when the management provides attractive training and development, career development and good management support. In addition, the findings indicated that career development was the most dominant factor influencing organizational commitment followed by training development and job compensation. However, management support factor does not affect the organizational commitment among public employees compared to the other factors

Keywords: organization commitment, employment compensation, training and development, career development, management support

Introduction

An organization is a working place that has two or more person working in coordinated activities in order to realize certain goals in the industry. It is also a collection of people and activities for a certain task to be executed (Nikmahajan, 2007). The development of human capital is important for the nation's development, through high-quality human capital. As a result, the nation can realize its aspiration through efficient and standardized human-resource management practices.

Meanwhile, public employees are people who work in the government sectors. Accordingly, these sectors are managed by ministries or departments that were given mandates by the government to achieve certain goals. They play a major role in proving the efficiency of the government through performance and discharging of their functions and responsibilities. Thus, human resource development is vital and important in performing and discharging these said responsibilities through highly skilled and knowledgeable personnel, in ensuring quality services to the general public.

Therefore, in the 9th and 10th Malaysia plan, the Malaysian government emphasized the development of human capital which aims to create highly skilled and knowledgeable workers (Economic report, 2009/2010).

The efficiency of the public service depends on the performance of the public employees. Public organizations and departments face various problems in enhancing the performance and commitment of their employees. Some of these problems are high absenteeism, low commitments; taking it easy on tasks given by the management and rude behavior practices (Saari, 2010).

Despite the effort and initiatives taken by the Malaysian government to instill efficiency and quality in employees in the public sector's civil servants, the sector's performance is marred by lackadaisical attitudes. Issues such as lack of responsibility by public employees have captured the attention and sparked endless debate among citizens. Initially, it was assumed that insufficient rewards, coupled with fewer advantages and benefits received by the civil servants led to this unsatisfactory result. Furthermore, when the employees have no opportunity and insufficient benefits from the organization there is tendency that emotionally and mentally disconnected from the organization. Consequently, the employees are not committed to the department that they serve and it will influence the performance of the organization.

The organizational commitment among public servants is important to make sure the quality of service delivered to the public is great, and it is also a cause of organizational performance. However, there are factors that influence the organizational commitment among the public servants who show genuine commitment towards the ministry or the department that they serve. Hence, this research aims to study organizational commitments by measuring whether factors such as training and development, job compensation, management support and career development has positive or negative influence on the commitment of University Malaya residential colleges' employees, the oldest public university in Malaysia, using residential colleges' employees as the sample.

Literature Review: Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is related to the attitude and behavior of a person in a particular organization. It is also defined as an organizational behavior and psychological attachment to any groups, associations and organizations which is not same with one individual to another individual. (Seok Hwan Lee and Olshfski, D. 2002). Organizational commitment is also described as loyalty and feeling as part of the organization; furthermore according to Seok Hwan Lee and Olshfski, D. 2002 organizational commitment can forecast the job performance, behavior, effectiveness of the employees and better performance of organization. According to Allan and Meyer (1991), organizational commitment is divided into three types, that are affective, continuance and normative commitment among the employees.

Affective commitment explained about positive emotional and belief as being part of the organization. However, it is different from continuance commitment which is commitment associated with the cost of leaving the organization.

A person is committed because of the fear associated with losing their membership, pension's accruals and close friendships among co-workers. Furthermore, normative commitment is about the sense of obligations and responsibility for the particular organizations. For example when the organization educates and provides training to them, it make them feel responsible and feel obliged to repay that debt through commitment to the organization.

Organizational commitments among employees are also associated with many factors such as job compensation, job satisfactions, job motivations, and organization environment and supervision (Darwish A.yousef, 1999). This phenomenon is not new as previous researches showed that organizational commitment has been associated with these factors among non-western settings. Other

than that, organizational commitment among the public employees can be lowered and present a negative effect due to lower performance of a particular employee.

Finally, this will affect their level of commitment to their organization (Yahya et, al. 2008). According to Robertson et, al. 2003, public or private employees' needs and interest must be taken into account by the organization in order to nurture higher levels of commitment. Therefore the strategies planned by the human resource department in a particular organization must take into account the employees' commitment such as job search, employees' desire and intent to leave and attitude toward organization that bring many positive impacts.

Job Compensation (Incentives Salary or Recognition)

Job compensation is one of the important elements in determining the commitment among employees in an organization. This is because when an organization provides stable job compensation, it will influence the commitment to serve and increase the level of motivation of employees. Salary is also associated with job compensation, as when the employees are satisfied with the pay, salary, incentives, allowance and pension, it will influence the commitment towards an organization (Getahun, S. Sim, B. & Hummer D, 2000). Past research indicated that a job's characteristics such as job compensation and pensions influenced parole officers' commitment, as 89 percent of the parole officers were satisfied with their receivables and contributes to their commitment and loyalty in performing their tasks (Getahun, S. Sim, B. & Hummer D, 2000). This showed that job compensation is one of the predictors that influence organizational commitment among employees, and is an important factor to make sure employees are committed or loyal to their organization.

Career Development

Career development can be defined as going up the ladder of hierarchy of an organization or simply called promotion from one position to a higher position. Career developments influence the employees' decision to stay or be loyal to the organization. If they get more opportunity to develop their career until managerial level such as managers, they will be more committed and bound in the organizations. This is evident during the Asia economic crisis, where in Korea, many young employees were forced to leave their companies because they were not guaranteed long-term tenure with less opportunity for career development. This shows that organizational commitment and good service delivery among employees are dependent on career development opportunities (Jung & Tak 2008). An employee will be more satisfied with their job if they believe they have a future in the organization that they serve. This will lead them to be more committed and do their task effectively and efficiently. Furthermore, they will be highly motivated and determined to work very hard to achieve what they want in their career. Aside from that, moving for better work position or promotion in an organization is based on fulfillment of some requirements such as knowledge, development and skills that are related to that position offered (Bashir & Ramay 2008). These show that employees will have positive emotional attachment towards their organization when they are given opportunity to develop their career.

Training Development

Training and development, as well as policies from the organization influence the enhancement of the skills of the employees, in helping them to understand and improve their skills in performing their task. Training and development will help employees to gain more experience and shape their talents for the improvements of their individual skills and organizational mission.

Organizational commitment arises when the employees are exposed to training and development of their skills according to the job scope. According to Schats (2007) there are emerging and increasing need in organizational commitment and training and development. This shows that in order to retain

and increase commitment, the employers must emphasize on giving training and provide a platform for developing their talents and skills. Training and development aim to improve job performance, especially for employees who use a certain technology, machines etc. Furthermore, it is also done to make sure the workforce adapt and be flexible to the nature of the work and contribute to better service delivery to the stakeholders (Hayton, 1999).

Management Support

Management support is defined as management and leadership support to the employees of an organization. The support of the management helps to enhance the commitment of the employees, and engage the employees to achieve their goals. Management support can be one of the actions taken to make sure employees are influenced through the leadership (Cooper, 2006). Leadership is also an activity or process of an organized group and efforts towards achieving the mission and vision of organization. Babou (2007) classified leadership style into two types that is transactional style and transformational style. Transactional leadership emphasized on the physical and security needs of subordinates. On the other hand, transformational style encourages subordinates to put-in extra effort and go beyond what they (subordinates) expected. This shows that to achieve the vision and mission of the organizations, it depends on the management support or leadership of the particular management.

A great leader will influence the subordinates through satisfactory policies that would result in enhancement of commitment from normal rate to higher and make them desired to succeed in achieving the goals of the organizations (Babou, 2007). According to research conducted on relationship between leaderships and work performance, the result showed positive relationship between commitment and satisfaction with the job they performed (Euske & Jackson, 1980; Slavery, 1994). Additionally, the management of the organization needs to take care of their employees and must attempt to fulfill their needs. This will enhance their job satisfaction and commitment. Furthermore, supportive leadership behaviours also influenced the attitudes of the employees which makes them loyal to the organization and creating sense of positive emotions that is important to the commitment to the task (Watson 2008).

“Managers could benefit from understanding the predictors of committed manpower because they can initiate the interventions when the problem exists. They can adopt, for example, the appropriate leadership behaviour in order to improve the level of organizational commitment and, in turn, the levels of job satisfaction and job performance” (Labatmediene, Endriulaitiene & Gustainiene, 2007)

This statement shows that management or leaders' support and encouragement are needed for the enhancement of commitment. This is another strategy to achieve the objectives of an organization in order to turn the employees' attitude or behaviours to become more productive and efficient. According to (Alimuddin, 2011) in one of his speech, he defined leadership “as a process of a leader to influence attitudes, behaviour and actions of their subordinates”. Furthermore, the leader must play a major role in giving directions, understanding, knowledge, encouragement, motivation and explain what they have in the future towards their employees. Higher quality of leadership enables enhancement of motivation and commitment among the employees to achieve the organization goal and objective. This shows that leadership is a vital element that is needed for the success of any organizations and communities.

Method

This study was conducted using the quatitative method in assessing the relationship between selected human resource activities with employees' organizational commitment. The population of the study was the staffs in 12 colleges in University of Malaya. Data gathered were analyzed using correlation,

analysis of variance and regression analysis. Questionnaires were distributed to the respondents as the instrument to collect data.

Findings and Recommendations

Several factors that are assumed to influence organizational commitments among University of Malaya Residential colleges' employees were explored. Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that three out of the four factors positively correlate with the organizational commitment; which are job compensation, training development and career development. All these dimensions have a p value of 0.000 (<0.05). This shows that the employees believed that these factors are needed and should be provided to enhance their commitment toward the organization. This finding is similar with the study by Yi Jen, (2007). The research findings also indicated that the most dominant dimension that influences employees' commitment the most is career development (Beta value of 0.30). However, the management support factor ($p=0.154$) such as leadership or officers' encouragement and supports have no influence on the organization commitment, thus reflecting that management support in this organization is not a suitable dimension in enhancing employees' commitment. This is contradictory with previous research by Cooper (2006) which stated that fine management supports enhance the commitment and performance of the employees.

Based on the results, several recommendations can be proposed in order to assist University Malaya's residential department to enhance the commitment of their employees and formulate good strategies and policies for human resource development. Below are some recommendations suggested to the University Malaya human resource development department in order to enhance the employees' organizational commitment.

Rising salaries and bonuses

Job compensations are benefits in terms of salary, bonuses and allowances; however, it is insufficient thus dampening their commitment to the organization. The human resource department should improve such benefits by raising salaries and bonuses to make sure employees are committed to their work and organization. This also shows that job compensations (remuneration) are important in encouraging the employees to do a good job as well as to enhance their motivation.

Provide training and development

Training development factor is one of the important activities to ensure employees' acquaintance to the development of their area of specialization through training and knowledge based individuals in completing their tasks. Therefore, training programs should be provided to employees to ensure that they are able to perform their work well as it can make them more responsible. The human resource department must formulate and frequently provide many training and development programs such as training for foundation skills, thinking skills and personal qualities etc. related to the scope of the employees' work. Moreover, training and development to the employees should be adequate in order to gain loyalty towards the organization and as well as to enhance commitment on their tasks.

Provide more career development programs

Career development such as promotion, better job and salary promotions, and career development programs influence commitment of the employees towards the organization. Employees need to be assisted with these kinds of programs to make sure they are committed and motivated. Greater number of Career programs provided will enhance their loyalty and work performance, which directly affects their commitment. Previous research showed that more and finer career development programs enhance the commitment of their employees as well as work performance. Career development opportunity is required to be exposed for the employees to enhance their effective working ability and performance. Career developments programs help them to learn and know well about their task or career. Career development programs such as career path, coaching and counseling and cross training

will assist the employees to become more skillful and more responsible to their tasks. Furthermore, the establishment of dual or multiple career tracks has proven to be an effective way to retain and motivate the employees' commitment.

Provide good management support

The management support is important to ensure employees are motivated as this brings positive effect to their organization commitment. In particular, support from officers or leaders does not influence their commitment towards this organization, however, the management should play a major roles in appreciating and motivating their employees by giving advices, encouragements and guidelines. Based on the result, it shows that management support in this organization is not well practiced, thus the management in this organization should improve more and become good role models to their employees in order to enhance the commitment.

Conclusion

In conclusion, in identifying the factors that influence the organizational commitment among University Malaya public employees, it clearly shows that only 3 factors influenced the commitment of the public employees. It is obvious that in order to enhance the commitment of the employees towards the organization, the organization must provide sufficient job compensations such as equitable salary, holidays, bonuses and allowances. These rewards are important to ensure the employees are committed and discharge their responsibilities towards the organizational goals and objectives. Secondly, the factor of training and development was found to influence the commitment, and this factor was one of the explanatory factors that should be given priority in the organization to ensure employees are experts in handling their tasks and their discharge of responsibilities towards the organization. Various training must be organized in order to equip the employees so that they may deliver the services effectively according to the scope of their job. Career development is another important variable that was found to enhance the employees' loyalty, responsibility and motivation towards the organization. Therefore, by giving opportunity for them in climbing up the ladder of career development through rapid promotions and counseling, it will enhance their commitment to the organization.

Finally, the management support factor is insignificant in the organization under study that is University Malaya, however, it was regarded as an important variable among others. Good management support such as efficient leadership, encouragement and support from the top management are important to enhance the employees' commitment. Therefore, in order to enhance the commitment of the employees, the management must formulate policies and strategies that can make them happy and fulfill their desires fairly. These factors are important in order to gain their loyalty in order to perform well in their duty.

As for future researches, it is suggested that focus should be given in determining other important factors that influences organizational commitment among public employees. Future researches also need to focus on others factors such as volume of workload, family supports, job security and job challenges. All of these can be done in determining the organizational commitment and should be referred to previous researches regarding their needs. This is because this research mostly emphasized on the internal factors rather than external, therefore others variables mentioned should be tested in other samples or areas.

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